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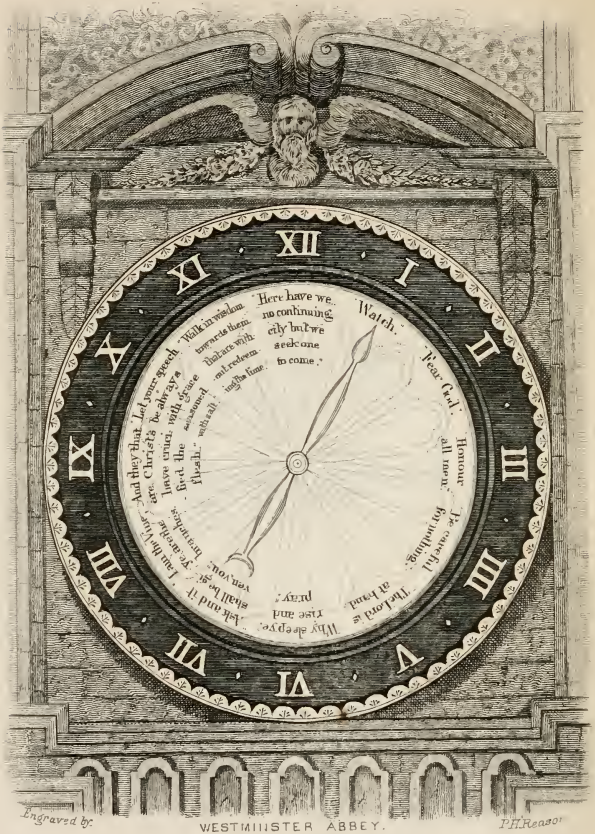
The Tongue of Time

OR THE LANGUAGE OF A CHURCH CLOCK.



Engraved by. WESTMINSTER ABBEY. P.H.Reason

I o'Clock. The Universal Command.

II . . } General Duties.
III . . }

IV . . . . . { The Christian Temper in regard to this life
V . . . . . Comfort and warning.

VI . . . . . The Summons

VII o'Clock Prayer.

VIII . . . . . The Principle of Grace.

IX . . . . . The Principle of Victory.

X . . . . . } Particular Duties.
XI . . . . . }

XII . . . . . The Look out.

New York Published by A.D.F.Randolph.

THE

TONGUE OF TIME:

OR, THE

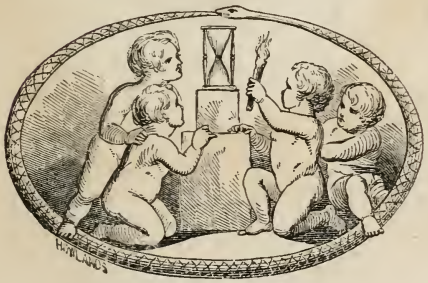
Language of a Church Clock.

BY

WILLIAM HARRISON, A.M.,

CHAPLAIN TO H. R. H. THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE; INCUMBENT OF ST. MICHAEL'S, PIMLICO, &c., &c.

From the Sixth London Edition.



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Preface to the First Edition.

THE design of this little work was suggested to me, a short time ago, by hearing the clock strike at midnight. A thought arose in my mind, of the vast number of hours which slip by without notice, unless some circumstance, or business, or engagement, happen to impress a few more particularly upon our attention. It immediately occurred to me, that the connection of some Scripture precept with each hour of the day, might not only lead the Christian to note more jealously the passing flight of Time, but would also as constantly remind him of its solemn and final object.

For this purpose, I have selected a few portions of the Word of God, accommodating the

number of words in each portion to the number of strokes in each hour; besides arranging, methodically, the various subjects, so as to give, in the whole, a short synopsis of Christian principles and duties. I have endeavored, also, to carry throughout such a reference to the sufferings of our Lord and only Saviour, Jesus Christ, as will enable the reader to realize, in every division of time, a part of that cross which was borne for us; and this is, in fact, the chief recommendation of the writing.

So little, indeed, is the composition intended to engross the attention of the reader, or to draw it off from the simple text attached to each hour, that, could the design have been published alone, he would have been presented only with what now constitutes the frontispiece. It will be seen that some of the passages are separated from their immediate context, and that others have been accommodated to certain truths; but I have only ventured upon the former, where the sense is still in

itself complete, and the real force of the passage is evident; and upon the latter, where, in addition to the real interpretation, I could introduce some wholesome thoughts in connection with them, without doing violence to the truth.

I trust that the Christian will not despise this little attempt to assist and encourage him, even though it should tell him nothing new; and if, after all, it should be found to possess no more merit than the machinery whose language it is supposed to interpret, it will abundantly repay me, if it should prove half as useful.

Preface to the Second Edition.

IT is with much thankfulness that I send forth the Second Edition of this little work. From the very rapid sale of the first thousand, and the kind notices which it has received from various Reviews and public journals, I cannot but augur that my design has been, to some extent, realized; and I trust I may express the hope that this little book is calculated to be useful in the great work of religious discipline, and that the mode in which the subject is handled is likely to arrest the attention of other than serious minds. I am glad, moreover, of this opportunity of correcting some inaccuracies which had escaped my observation in the former sheets. And thus I dismiss the Second Edition, with the humble but earnest prayer that its pages may be blest to those that read, and to him that wrote them.

CHRIST'S HOSPITAL. 1843.

Preface to the Third Edition.

THE steady sale of another thousand, and the demand for a Third Edition of the "Tongue of Time," within little more than a year, have strengthened the highest ambition that I am desirous of entertaining, namely, that, through the blessing of God, I may not be without some use in my generation. The present success of this little book, moreover, confirms what I have always thought, that as in nature so in the moral world, the small streams and the road-side brooks act a very useful, though subordinate part, in refreshing their several localities. I may add, that I am abundantly thankful to be permitted to pour in my trifling contribution to the larger streams of instruction, and to think that it may be received at last into the great and eternal ocean of truth.

CHRIST'S HOSPITAL, 1844.

Introductory Address.

READER! You have often heard the clock strike. Have you ever thought upon its meaning? Monotonous as its sounds may be to a careless ear, they have language. Not an hour but carries its lesson. Far-reaching in its scope, every stroke of that ponderous hammer summons before you the three grand attributes of Time. From each tower and belfry, Time calls to you with solemn but benignant voice, as if unwilling that you should lose sight of your privileges. It speaks of itself; it speaks also of you. It declares, "I WAS." I came to you, Christian, as a friend sent from a loving hand, to be an instrument of good to your soul, and a promoter of its everlasting peace. Whatever you have done with me is past. If good, thank God; if evil, "*be watchful, and*

strengthen the things that remain" For, "I AM." As the plastic clay in the potter's hands, you may mould and impress me as you will. I am come to bear the record "*of works, and charity, and service, and faith, and patience.*" Oh, then, "*give all diligence to make your calling and election sure.*" Use me well, and you will not, hereafter, blush at my report; for "I SHALL BE." Brief is the appointed term, but yet a little while I am with you. While, then, you look back to the past for experience, lay hold upon the present as a treasure, and look onward with the patient and steady eye of hope. Behold! the Bridegroom cometh at an hour when you know not. Expect Him, and be ready; your loins girded, and your lamp burning; lest, after many a round of unheeded hours, you should be forced to cry, "*The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.*"

Such, reader, is the meaning of that measured sound, which, it may be, you daily hear proceeding from some sacred pile: and in-

deed there is as much of truth as of fancy in the statement; for Time is like a merchant's capital—ventured it must be, if we would live. If used with judgment and skill, profitable indeed will be its harvest, repaying us, in proportion to our exertions, thirty, or sixty, or an hundred fold. And why not an hundred fold for us all? For Time is the universal talent, subjecting every man living to a charge and an accompt. Within its circle all our other talents turn. They are the wheels within this great wheel, whose united movement causes it to revolve, for as they are duly exercised, Time is successfully employed. Lastly, it is the entail of humanity, come down to us as our inalienable heritage; and, as in the law of primogeniture, unencumbered with our father's debts. God grant, reader, that you and I may prove such wise occupants and inheritors of this invaluable property, that, whatever may be the passing anxieties of its tenure, we may realize its profits in the kingdom of Heaven!

THE TONGUE OF TIME.

ONE O'CLOCK.

"WATCH."
Mark iv. 6.

THE UNIVERSAL COMMAND.

THIS is a needful warning! It is but once in the day that it greets our ears. Its next sound comes in the dead of night. Few comparatively are the ears that hear it then: some children of plea-

sure at the fag end of their toil; some solitary bending over the lettered page, or taxing his o'erwrought brain; some anxious spirit watching by the curtains of sickness; some restless body tossing upon a bed of pain. To these the single stroke of time, perchance, may come at night; but to the rest of the world it speaks at noon-day, and, whether for these or them, alike needful is the warning—"WATCH." This is the time when the world is most busy, when the hive is stirred, and its inmates are bustling. The business of the day is in full operation. The nets of the adversary are spread far and wide, and, amid all this turmoil, Time lifts up his voice, and as he again commences his steady round, reminds thee, Christian, to WATCH.

Christian! thou art on duty. Remember, therefore, that a soldier must not be off his guard in the enemy's country. Every device that can be employed to distract thy attention

will be used against thee. Covetousness opens before thee as a pitfall, (1 Tim. vi. 9.) Worldly cares are on thy right hand in ambuscade. False principles, like the light cavalry, hover on thy left. Self-interest offers his services as a treacherous guide to conduct thee. And, last of all, the world's maxims and frowns stand in deep column to resist thee. "*But thou, O man of God, fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called.*" "*Be sober and watch unto prayer.*" It may be, however, that this is an hour of relaxation to the reader; when a short breathing is allowed him amid the exercise of the day. Still let the stroke of Time bring before him the same caution. Short, indeed, is the term of our service here, and, even while reading this page, the moments of the hour are vanishing with noiseless steps. No time have we then for security. Security is the olive leaf upon the

conqueror's brow. Does ONE O'CLOCK, then, bring to the reader a short remission of work, let him not put off his armor, but, like Habakkuk, let him stand upon his watch, and set him upon the tower, and watch lest God should speak to him. Soft are the gales of the Spirit, and unheard their breathings by ears that are ever filled with the din of the world, or by hearts which are torn with distractions. If we would discern the still, small voice, we must keep our hearts quiet, and listen.

Christian! once more. It may be, thou shalt hear this hour when weary bodies are sleeping. Should this stroke attract thy attention, remember Jesus! This was the hour of His passion. Then was it that the nearness of His approaching trial began to pierce His soul. Often had His spirit shrunk from contact with the sin around Him. More than once He was forced to look up to heaven

and sigh. More than once He gave vent to His anguish of heart: "*How long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you?*" But now He was to bear the consequence of *imputed* sin. He was to be accounted THE SINNER: not as one of us, but worse than any *single* offender, for He was to bear the sin of *many;* and this, too, not in the sight of men only, as an execrated criminal, but in the sight of His august and holy Father, as the representative of a world of iniquity. This was the pang, that at this hour was commencing; teaching us that there is no real punishment but the absence of God; and that this in itself is Hell. Then was it that He bade His friends "WATCH." Oh! if vain thoughts or thoughts of sin molest thee, think upon Gethsemane. Carry thy heart to that garden where the crushed olive gave out its perfume, and He that made the peace of the world was wounded for thy transgressions. In this hour

He fell on the ground and prayed. If sleep be not near thine eyelids, do thou watch with Jesus and pray.

TWO O'CLOCK.

"FEAR GOD."
1 *Pet.* ii. 17.

GENERAL DUTIES.

SHORT is the lesson to which the hour of Two calls our attention, and yet the Bible declares it to be the whole duty of man, and the summary of all instruction. And is it not so? Congregated as we are, upon one spot in the measureless ocean of space, and intertwined in the relationship of being, by the identity of nature,

feelings, habits, occupations, interests, we all stand alone and unattached in regard to God. Between us and Him there is no intervening power, nor second principle. As the planets together form one system, and yet are vitally influenced and governed by the sun, rolling together in wonderful harmony, but deriving all their benefits from that orb alone; so we are held and sustained in our respective orbits by the sole energy of God, while we are yet commingled in the various relations of life. From Him, indeed, life physical and spiritual directly proceed, insomuch that, as the Apostle expresses it, "IN *Him we live and move and have our being.*" Let the hour of Two, then, impress upon the reader this element of his immortality: "FEAR GOD." And what is it to fear God? It is not to be afraid of Him, though that sentiment may well be entertained towards One who can destroy both body and soul in Hell. And, indeed, Christian, if thy

heart be not cleansed from sin, it were well that thou shouldst fear Him thus. But it behooves the child of God to fear Him without terror, and dread Him without alarm. Christian fear is the sacred awe of a creature in union with the fervent affection of a child; for though there may be nothing of fear in love, yet is there a holy love in such a fear. In a word, it is the adoration of love.

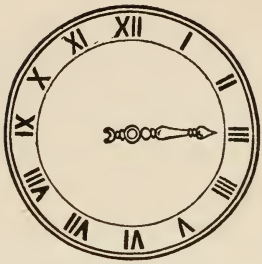
This is the first branch of general duty: the abstract of the first great commandment. All things flow from it that tend to wisdom, holiness, and life. We have learned nothing in the school of religion till we have learned it; and when we shall have arrived at the perfection of an archangel's purity, we can learn no more.

And now, reader, noon is past already—but a few hours, and darkness shall close in the day. When, therefore, the Clock reminds thee of this hour, let it refresh thy resolve to

cultivate this spirit. Oh! it will save thee many a perplexity, and many an uncomfortable reflection. It warns thee against offenses: "*Stand in awe, and sin not.*" It bucklers thee against the fear of man, as it fortified the three young Jews against the wrath of a Nebuchadnezzar, and kept the apostles calm in the face of the Sanhedrim. It brings thee, as it were, under the sensible inspection of the eye of God; denuding all earthly objects of their pretensions, and raising thee into communion with uncreated Intelligence, for "*the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him.*" It purges the heart, for "*the fear of the Lord is clean.*" Who knows how opportunely the hour of Two may come to thy soul? Perhaps it shall be when thou art on the brink of some unjust transaction, or some unfair advantage; perhaps when thou art angry, or heated with discussion, or tempted to forget thy spiritual associations and privileges; or,

it may be, when thy whole soul is concentrated in the issue of some gainful enterprise. Oh! if thou shouldst be reminded at that juncture to *fear* God, will it not be good for thy neighbor's cause, and better for thine own soul? It was at this time that Jesus was hanging on the cross, in the last hour of His desertion. In this solitary abandonment He exhibited the penalty of sin—the abhorrence and displeasure of the God of Love, who, when He looked upon His only and well-beloved Son as the representative of rebels, turned from Him for a while, and hid His face in clouds. Think on this, and it will make sin odious and dreadful; and, while it puts thee on thy guard against surprises, will demonstrate the value of a godly fear.

THREE O'CLOCK.



"HONOR ALL MEN."
1 *Pet.* ii. 17.

GENERAL DUTIES.

THE Epistles of St. Peter are not merely remarkable for the truths that they contain, but also for many touches of practical wisdom, which, while they indicate a great knowledge of human nature, are admirably adapted to the intercourse of society. There is a wholesome good sense in many of his precepts, which qualifies

them no less to form the manners and tastes of the gentleman, than to enlighten the conscience of the Christian. In short, they might, without derogation, be called the elements of good breeding. It is so important that religion should carry the charm of courtesy and gentleness at least, to temper its indispensable faithfulness and zeal, that no man can be universally useful who wants them. There is too much of zeal without this chastening disposition, although none of us like to be roughly handled, since we receive even rebuke with more readiness, when it comes with a courteous manner and a gentle tone. But, besides this, there is a certain deference due to every man. Nothing strips any individual of this right but unwarrantable temper or aggression, of which no Christian would take a vindictive advantage. Personal feelings, in short, are sacred, and the peasant may have to complain of undue liberties, as well as the

peer; for we are all, in one way or another, sensitive plants, and feel the rubs of unkindness, however little others may give us credit for the sensibility. We must be careful, however, not to confound this, nor to allow our want of courage to take shelter under the fear of offense. Speak we often must, and that decidedly; offend we sometimes shall, and that deeply; but the cause must not be found in our bad manners.

The hour of THREE will enable the reader to apply to his own heart the provision which the Apostle makes against this defect; for no Christian can be rude who remembers thus to "*honor all men.*" Many persons so often mistake bluntness for candor, that this rule can never be too strongly impressed upon us. Thus, persons in authority, for example, or such as hold official or professional posts, not unfrequently have recourse even to roughness of manners, in order to get rid of the

inconvenient tax which inconsiderate people lay upon their time or attention. But is not this done at the expense of brotherly kindness? No good feeling can ever be purchased by rudeness or neglect; while much has been preserved, in spite of disadvantages, by civility on the one side, and courtesy on the other. Nothing sets forth the sufficiency of religion, for the management of the ordinary business of life, more than such little touches as we meet with in the Bible, "*Be pitiful, be courteous*, HONOR ALL MEN."

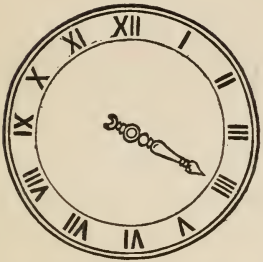
This last sentiment, indeed, is equivalent to the sum of the second table, and is a fit successor to the admonition of the foregoing hour. The two together include the total of human obligation. How much is contained in a little word! In this respect Scripture may be likened to the eye, that holds in its tiny mirror more space than could be traversed in a thousand years. But the reader

is, doubtless, occupied deeply at this hour. Possibly he is tired with the objections or thwarting interests of others. He has been for some hours at his employment, and is somewhat weary in mind. The adversary is glad of a weary moment, if he can but betray us even into a hasty expression. If such should be the reader's case, let this hour bring its accompanying exhortation to his mind—"HONOR ALL MEN." THREE O'CLOCK is a point of time consecrated by the burst of a dying Saviour's anguish. It was at this season that, in the yet lingering darkness, after He had been hanging in silent endurance for three hours, while the then speechless throng were still watching Him, He uttered those mysterious words, "ELOI! ELOI! LAMA SABACTHANI?" This hour is consecrated to love, therefore, as he himself tells us, "*Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*" This was His love, the

appointed rule and pattern for ours: "*A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another:* AS I HAVE LOVED YOU, *that ye also love one another.*" Was it not intended in this that we should submit to some inconveniences, not to say self-denials, in order to keep up the charter of the Gospel? Forbearance is only a part of the charge, though a very important one; but we who are called upon, as it were, to wash the feet of our brethren, are reminded in that figurative action to pay them the outward tribute of love, as well as to learn the discipline of a meek spirit. In the intercourse of every-day life, many will be the occasions for the exercise of the principle of which we have been speaking. Let not the reader, then, be weary in well-doing; nor let him suppose that gentleness and courteousness can ever be thrown away; for if they should even fail to awaken a response in some ill-regulated heart, they will not be lost

in their practical benefit to ourselves, their silent example to others, and their submission to Him whose will it is that we should 'HONOR ALL MEN."

FOUR O'CLOCK.



"BE CAREFUL FOR NOTHING."
Philipp. iv. 6.

THE CHRISTIAN'S TEMPER IN REGARD TO THIS LIFE.

TO be diligent in our business, without being devoted to it; to have an enterprising spirit, and to be chastened withal in the pursuit of the object, is that happy reconciliation between this life and the next which is attained only by the favored few, but the key to which is to be

found in the foregoing precept. The natural man has ever been at a loss to understand this, and it is, perhaps, one of the last things that is perfectly learned by the Christian. But, in truth, this principle lies at the threshold of all our permanent peace, whether in temporal or spiritual matters. Here it is, however, that we see one of the great contradictions of human nature. Our anxieties spring from the tacit sense of our own insufficiency, and yet we depend upon ourselves because we are afraid to trust Him, whom, after all, we are obliged to recognize as the sole fountain and dispenser of all things. What a simple, but what a wonderful thing is Faith! And yet, in most of us, the amount of it is incredibly small. There is something so all-conclusive and satisfactory in the abstract view of dependence upon a supreme and loving Father, that it is only when we are required to put it into operation that we

detect the utter fallacy of imagination, and the desperate deadness of our own hearts. Little, however, as is to be said for the general appearance of faith, the Christian has his *Jehovah-jireh*. It were saying little, indeed, for the Gospel, if Abraham's conduct (Gen. xxii. 8–14) and David's feelings, expressed in the twenty-third Psalm, had not many imitators, or awakened no kindred sentiments in the Christian's breast.

But the Clock is striking FOUR, and its tone comes somewhat softer to the fancy when associated with this language of encouragement—"BE CAREFUL FOR NOTHING." The day is waning, and its work is drawing to a close. The reader is, perhaps, on 'Change. He is one of that bustling throng whom the business of this world brings together for the space of a few minutes, from every country on its surface. Amid those calculating heads and thoughtful faces, is all to be of this world

alone? Would it be out of place for us to exchange words of another life while we are providing for this? Shall Christian men, even while buying and selling, proscribe all mention of the grand conclusion and winding up of these arrangements and accounts? Why, then, is the presence of divine things considered unfitting for such employment, and why cannot we appreciate the combination? The answer is simple: We are too careful; we would be our own providers.

But now, reader, let the hour that summons thee to go on 'Change, not only remind thee to be "CAREFUL FOR NOTHING," but let it make that place thy Jehovah-jireh. While the hum of voices fills thine ears, and money is changing hands, and the shrewd speculator is at his figures; while thou art about to make provision for a future day, lift up thine heart in faith, and say, "*The Lord will provide.*" The thought of this will calm thy

soul, and relieve thee of that unhealthy excitement which clogs the mind when we are too busy for this world. It may be, however, that the hour of FOUR shall one day fall upon the reader's ear amid the pressure of some trial, either of the adverse turn of his affairs, or of a calamitous loss. Will it not afford him some thoughts of childlike submission, and cheerful but dependent hope, to associate these comforting words of the Apostle with the hour? What if things have gone wrong with thee? "BE CAREFUL FOR NOTHING." The Lord hath taken away, but the Lord gave. Why, then, be cast down? The Lord has provided for thee hitherto: the Lord will provide for thee still. We have two instances recorded in the histories of Elijah and Elisha of the support of two widows in a time of dearth. The second case, however, ought forcibly to remind the Christian of the power of his Great Prophet. "*Elisha said unto her*,

What shall I do for thee? tell me." Jesus says to His petitioners—"*Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat; or, What shall we drink; or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.*" If thou wouldst stand aloof from distrust, care would not darken thy doors. Little could the three kings in the wilderness of Edom calculate on seeing floods without rain, and the dry, parched country filled with water. But the Lord had His purposes; and in His own time, when men would see His hand in the matter, He made the valley full of ditches. Do thou, therefore, trust Him; and while the stroke of FOUR bids thee "BE CAREFUL FOR NOTHING," let this practical comfort take hold of thy heart: "*Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*"

FIVE O'CLOCK.

"THE LORD IS AT HAND."
Philipp. iv. 7.

COMFORT AND WARNING.

IT was not, surely, without reason that our blessed Master, and the apostolical writers after him, so repeatedly enforced upon Christians the peculiar expectancy of their condition as disciples. Every thing in the circumstances of the early Church appears to have given an additional representation of this feature; and it is only

when the formal and external fabric has been settled, and the Gospel has enjoyed a long triumph, that the sense of so important a characteristic seems to have passed away. It is not, indeed, the general and popular condition of the Church to which allusion is here made, but the individual position of every believing Christian. Do we, then, sufficiently consider our present separation from the sight of Him, "*whom not having seen we love*," in the light of a privation—in such a light as that in which He himself put it: "*The days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast.*" Was it not the intention of all this to hold up the distinction between the servant of the cross and the world? Was it not to teach us to sit so loosely to all attractions here, that we might be ready, as it were, at a moment's notice, to go forth and meet the bridegroom, and that we might exhibit the power of a

living faith, to the glory of the grace of God? But it is not the Master alone who has called off His followers from the engrossing pursuits of the world. A similar intention seems to have influenced the Apostle, who admonished the Philippians to remember that "THE LORD IS AT HAND."

The warning stands midway between two exhortations, to either or both of which its significant conclusion may extend. If referred to the former, it would act as a spur to self-denial, and encourage them to "*let their moderation be known unto all men.*" If to the latter, it would remind them that their Heavenly Father was aware of their necessities, and that they were, therefore, to "*be careful for nothing.*" The same principle is applicable to either result. The active habit of self-denial, and the passive submission of a thorough dependence upon God, may spring alike from the expectation that "THE LORD IS AT HAND."

Not unsuitable, therefore, is the apostolic caution to the hour of FIVE. Whether it comes in the early dawn, or at the closing of the day's work, when we are about to refresh our bodies with the day's meal, it greets us with equal appropriateness. "THE LORD IS AT HAND," both prophetically and actually. In the former case, He comes to reign and judge; in the latter, He is nigh to overlook and provide. Is the Christian reader, then, reminded of this hour, when the morning's sun is opening its golden eye upon his hemisphere, and the gray mist is rolling away before its brightness? Let him remember that the Sun of Righteousness is at hand likewise. It is a solemn, peaceful hour. The world is not yet awake; its energies and its vices are sleeping: and in such an hour the Lord *may* come. It will be a good commencement of the day, if the reader will occupy himself in meditating upon this event:

"'My Lord is at hand.' How many are there that will expect Him? One half the world will be asleep; the other will be absorbed in the day's work. Shall He find faith when He comes? Will men believe His approach? Are they looking for it? O! my Saviour, let me have mine eye fixed in the direction of Thy royal highway. Let mine ear catch the distant tokens of Thy approach. Ere Thy chariot of fire shall rush upon an unexpected world, let those that expect Thee be ready and awake. And as, at Thy coming, houses and lands, honors and employments, will cease to us, let me only use them as a temporary charge, and remember that the fashion of this world passeth away. Let me show my moderation to all men, and be careful for nothing."

"At this hour Thou wast surrounded by a tumultuous rabble: no rest had come near thine eyelids. Faint and worn, heart-broken

and pierced with many sorrows, Thy weary frame was dragged before rulers for my sake. Oh! let my heart go forth to Thee, and espouse Thy cross. At this hour, too, Thou hadst risen from the grave, and conquered the conqueror, for 'Thou wast up by break of day.' Oh! let me rise in Thy strength, and shake off my sins, as Thou didst burst the wrappings of the cerecloth. Let me begin the day with Thee."

But the hour of FIVE comes with almost universal notice in the other division of the day. Most of us are ceasing from our labors, or preparing to enjoy the day's meal, or refreshing our minds with some relaxation. In this season, let the Christian consider that "THE LORD IS AT HAND," to overlook and provide. If he be partaking of the creatures which God has given to us, let him remember that they are purchased by the blood of Christ, and sanctified by the Word of God

and prayer. Let him associate the Lord's bounties with that sacrifice which hath made all things clean to our use. To the expectant believer the Lord presents himself at the board, and invites him as He invited the disciples by the side of Galilee's waters: "*Come and dine.*" Here he is called to faith. "THE LORD IS AT HAND." "*Let thy moderation, therefore, be known.*" "THE LORD IS AT HAND." "*Be careful, therefore, for nothing.*" It may be, however, that the reader is refreshing his mind with some innocent gratification. Let the hour of FIVE, then, remind him that the Lord is overlooking his proceedings: "*Thou compassest my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.*" "God," said some one of old, "is a Great Eye." Beware then, Christian, of unbelief. If thou believest that God sees thee, thou canst not be mindful of His attributes, and sin. Wherever thou art, it is the same: at

thy table, or in the park, God seeth thee. Thy secret imaginations and purposes are as overt as thine open words and deeds. This is publicity of which thou needest not be afraid, if thine heart be right; but, if deceitful, let it cleanse thee, for thou canst not shake it off. In all thy ways remember that "THE LORD IS AT HAND." And that thou mayest be kept to this, consider and apply the Apostle's memento: "*Some have entertained angels unawares.*" Was it not at this hour that two friends were walking homeward, conversing with a mournful interest about divine things and Him that had died near Jerusalem? Was not this the hour when a Stranger joined them, and made their hearts burn as He opened to them the things that showed forth the Redeemer of men? Was not this the hour, in short, when Jesus talked by the way with two of His disciples? Such an honor may be thine. Carry with thee such thoughts

as they had, and it may be that the Lord shall manifest Himself, and so fill thee with His welcome presence, that thou shalt be kindled by its influence, and enjoy such a refreshment of soul as will send thee on thy way rejoicing.

SIX O'CLOCK.

"WHY SLEEP YE? RISE AND PRAY."
Luke xxii. 46.

THE SUMMONS.

THESE words were uttered at an earlier hour than this, at which time there was such an occasion for watchfulness as will never occur again. Their number, however, suits the hour of SIX, and SIX O'CLOCK is a fitting time for a man to rise and pray. Christian reader, it is a good thing for a man to begin his day with an act

of self-denial. Time has many depredators, but none so extensive as sleep. He, therefore, that begins the day by curbing his self-indulgence, gives a fillip to his conscience, and braces his resolution to achieve another victory over self. There is no apology for abundance of sleep but a weak frame or a sick body; and as little for a late hour. Useless, indeed, would the divisions of time be, if that sun, which wakes all the rest of creation, should fail to arouse the chief organ and mouthpiece of its daily praises—Man. Twice does David specifically mention this duty: "*Awake up, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.*" And is it not becoming, when all creation is pouring forth its praise, man should lead the chorus? Long ere this hour has arrived, the birds have begun to pipe their thanksgiving. By this time the sweetest, because the freshest, breath of the morning is beginning to ascend. The sun has had

power enough to call out and combine those odors which are never, as then, so fragrant. Oh, it is the holiest hour! so tranquil, that it invites to prayer! There is, as it were, a pause in the world's evil. Like one awaking, and not quite awake, it is not yet come to itself. Think, then, Christian, that at this hour there stands one by the curtains of thy bed, who gravely but gently admonishes thee, "WHY SLEEPEST THOU? RISE AND PRAY." Yes, this is a fitting couplet—*Rise* and *pray*. "RISE! for, at this hour, I witnessed my good confession before Pontius Pilate. I hid not my face from shame and spitting. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair." "PRAY! *lest ye enter into temptation.*"

This is the time of a Christian's strength. It is the opportunity for getting a start of the world. An hour's communion with God at this season, often turns the scale of the day;

for it is a matter of Christian experience, that the tone of a man's spirituality is very much affected by the use he makes of it. If he uses it to this purpose, he gets on his way while the world is still asleep, and before it can come in with its business and distractions; and it is his own fault if he cannot keep the heading during the rest of the day. Like one who has mingled in the best society, he cannot soon reconcile himself to low company. There is also another advantage. The employment of this early hour imparts a satisfaction to the mind, that affects it with a peculiar cheerfulness throughout the day. The fact is, that we have obtained a little conquest over self-indulgence, and we are conscious of it. Nor should this sentiment be undervalued. No emotion of the mind is more sustaining and healthy in its effects than cheerfulness. "*For the joy of the Lord is your strength.*" Neh. viii. 10. It not only makes

us set about our duties with a good heart, therefore, but it is a feeling which, when it arises from a consciousness of successful exertion, encourages us to fulfil them heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. The Scripture, moreover, tells us, that God loves "*a cheerful giver*," from which we are to infer that He is more pleased with cheerfulness than constraint in His service, and that joy is, or ought to be, its constant companion.

But we are reminded that SIX O'CLOCK comes also at another portion of the day. This is a season that demands no less self-denial than the former, and more watchfulness. Indulgence, whether of body or mind, is usually connected with it. How needful is it, therefore, Christian reader, that the Saviour's warning should be allied to this hour: "WHY SLEEP YE? RISE AND PRAY." It is not now of bodily slumber that thou art warned. Beware lest thine heart should fall asleep! The

social meal, the mirthful talk, the idle hour, or some other intended recreation, may lull thee into a foolish indulgence as much as thy bed. Remember, therefore, that at this hour the lifeless body of thy Redeemer was laid in its last earthly dwelling-place. *Last!* should we say? It was the *only* place that the Heir of all things had wherein to lay His head. Sorrowing and devoted hands had wrapped Him reverentially in fine linen, with as much haste as they could, and then laid Him, composed in decent order, in His new and lowly home. With such a thought in thy mind as the Clock tells this hour, let the Apostle's language stand on thy lips: "*Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death.*" Dead, yet alive! Asleep with Jesus, yet awake! Such is the paradox of the saint's condition. Dear reader, is such a condition thine? Oh, then, let thine heart watch, lest thou shouldst be betrayed into sin. When thy body, or thy

fancy, is deriving entertainment from what is passing, see that there be nothing which can shut out the grand object of thy soul. What a power of thought lies in those little words: "*To live is Christ!*" Christ is the sum-total of a Christian's life. Every moment is Christ. Every subject is Christ. Every thought is Christ. Every design is Christ. Canst thou say as much? If not, "RISE FROM THY LETHARGY AND PRAY."

SEVEN O'CLOCK.

"ASK! AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN YOU."
Matt. vii. 7.

PRAYER.

PRAYER is the panacea of trouble, necessities, desire; in short, of every thing which can affect the mind and soul of man. This is a comprehensive challenge, but the Apostle says, "*Be careful* FOR NOTHING, *but* IN EVERY THING *by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.*" It is

in order that the reader may be enabled to realize the practical comfort of this advice, that SEVEN O'CLOCK is supposed to summon him to prayer with these encouraging words! "ASK! AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN YOU." Let SEVEN O'CLOCK, then, be the reader's call to matins. If he rises at some time in the previous hour, he will, probably, be enabled to enjoy an undisturbed season of devotion until Eight o'Clock. Less time must suit, if we cannot give it; but then, our meditation upon the Word, and our accompanying worship, must be sadly curtailed, and our souls will be proportionably deprived. Nor does any subsequent appropriation of time compensate for the loss of the morning's portion. Whatever first fills the mind and heart, gives more or less tone to the thoughts of the day; and it may be put generally to any Christian, whether he has not felt his degree of spirituality in the day affected in proportion to his enjoy-

ment of the morning's devotion; and whether the early prayer has not always predisposed him for more? The language adapted to the foregoing hour may be so far applied to this, that it contains the *exhortation* to prayer. In this supposed address of SEVEN O'CLOCK, however, we have the essence of prayer itself—a simple confidence—"ASK!" Let us call it the essence of prayer, for so it is, because it implies sincere faith, and sincere faith involves all the other grand requisites. Above all things, it involves abstinence from sin. Unmortified sin, and dalliance with temptation, make a mockery of prayer; for a man cannot heartily invoke the grace of God who is not sincere in withstanding his own corruption. Such prayer wants the eloquence of desire. The Apostle Paul comprehends, in a few words, all the requisites of right prayer: "*Lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.*" The first gives us holiness; the se-

cond, charity; the third, faith; and prayer is no prayer without them. The reader will judge from this, how necessary is that other caution of the Apostle, that we should "*watch unto prayer;*" for how is he sufficient for these things who cannot ascertain the present state of his own heart?

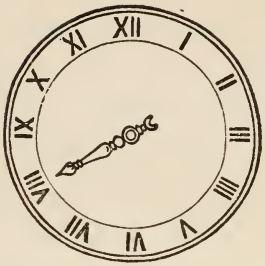
But, to return to the encouragement, consider what motives we have to pray! We have every thing to gain, and nothing to lose; we have neither venture nor risk. On the other hand, we *must* pray, if we would be safe, for nothing of eternal weight will be granted without asking. But, besides this, prayer is the only method of keeping up our correspondence with God. We are like children at a distance from home, and we must write to our Parent. It is true that He can learn how we are going on, and what our necessities are, without this; but He has a right to expect that we should ourselves ac-

quaint Him with our circumstances. How foolish were it in a child to say: "I know that my father would allow me this, or give me that, if I would but write; but, though I want it much, I do not feel inclined to take the trouble." And yet our dulness and disinclination to prayer are worse than the folly of the child. Dear reader, if such is your case, put away your childishness. The Apostle says: "*When I became a man, I put away childish things.*" Do not act any longer as a silly child. If your Father's house is precious in your sight, remember that you are now, as it were, under tutors and governors; and that when you shall have been duly exercised unto godliness and patience, you will be summoned home to dwell with Him. Ask, then, for all that is needful for your salvation, and it shall be given you. Ask, in submission, for all that you desire, and if it be good, you shall have that also. What more can

you want? Rest upon the simple promise of Christ: "ASK! AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN YOU." This includes every thing. The King's Son has volunteered to take charge of your petitions, however numerous or particular, provided they be but attested by the seal of Faith. Without question, therefore, prayer is the most important habit of the Christian life. It commands every other habit, and, like a master-key, opens all the locks. It is also the greatest promoter of cheerfulness and vigor, and imparts such a liveliness to the spirits, that difficulties appear only half their size. Christian! be much with God. It is not the world that will make your face shine as that of Moses did: it is not the world that will place the Everlasting Arms underneath you. These are the rewards of *prayer;* and he who is most in it, and makes it to bear most universally upon his affairs of body and soul, realizes most of

the blessing. To all this, only one caution more need be added. Faith implies Hope, and Hope, Patience; for "*if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.*" It were but ill manners in us to ask a great man for a precious gift, and not to wait for his answer. God is not sparing in his bestowment of good; and if Alexander gives as a king, surely God is not to be outdone by His creature, but will act up to his own character. We are not only to pray, therefore, but to expect; not only to expect, but to wait. Stay, then, dear reader, and hear the fate of your petition. If you have indited it by the help of the Spirit, sealed it with Faith, and delivered it to the Prince, you have the strongest possible ground of confidence. After this, you have nothing for it, but to wait; and, truly, you have need of patience, that you may receive the promise, for "*in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*"

EIGHT O'CLOCK.



"I AM THE VINE, YE ARE THE BRANCHES."
John xv. 5.

THE PRINCIPLE OF GRACE.

THERE is a beautiful operation in floral gardening, called "budding," by which a rose tree may be made to bear a vast number of roses of different forms and colors, which all derive their nourishment and life from one and the same stock. This is no inapt illustration of the Church's position and connection in regard to

the Saviour. Jesus Christ is the principle of our spiritual being; a truth which He himself expressed in those words, of which EIGHT O'CLOCK may serve to remind us.

The reader is, at this hour, preparing for his daily employment: he will at once appreciate, then, the thought which this language suggests, namely, that all his strength for the ensuing day is derived from Jesus, and that it will only be retained so long as he continues in Him. The Christian is a bud of this chief of flowers—a branch of this most precious tree. This enables him to say, "*I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*" This is the foundation of the distinction between him and the world; a distinction which he must ever carefully remember, and rigidly preserve. The broad, black feature of the world is opposition to Christ: opposition to His spirit, His forbearance, His gentleness, His holiness. Amid all this, the believer has to

walk; and he must carry about with him, as an amulet, the talismanic name of CHRISTIAN! Great and vile; despised, yet honored name! what magic is there in thy sound! Didst *thou* nerve the dying martyrs of old, the hoary head whose sand had almost run out, and the delicate flower that was just bursting into womanhood? Was it *thy* soothing influence that deadened the anguish of the torture, and composed the quivering limbs? What deep meaning lies couched in thee? "A CHRISTIAN!" And what is it to be a Christian? Is it not to be baptized? Is it not to be a member of a Church? Is it not to use ordinances and forms? But what, then, is this angry spirit, this covetous heart, this sensual eye, this obdurate soul, this lover of pleasure and ease, to whom all these privileges yet belong? How shall we reconcile these things? Ask, reader, of the Word. That tells thee—"*He is not a Jew*

that is one outwardly." "*They are not all Israel which are of Israel.*" To be Christ's servant, and yet not a Christian, is analogically the same; but to be the Christian is another matter. This is to be in Christ, and to have his spirit. And this is the origin of all distinction between the branch and the world. All baptized beings are Christ's *servants:* the nobleman and the man of fashion, the idler and the time-killer, as well as the humbler passengers on life's highway. But the world has no part in Christ, for he has said of it—"*If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.*" This truth, and the difference that it expresses, were once witnessed by this very hour. About this time it was that the fate of thy Lord was decided. Around one whom false judgment had condemned, trooped a tumultuous throng. Of them many, but a short time before, had shouted Hosannas to

the same solitary being, that were now yelling, with hoarse and furious voices, "*Crucify him! crucify him!*" This was the world. These were the characters represented in the parable of the sower, under the images of the wayside, the rock, and the thorny ground. These had heard, commended, and even followed; but the tide was turned, and so were they. Christian reader! it is amongst such that thou art walking now. Not that they are ruffians in appearance, or even in heart, but that they understand not the language of the apostle, "*Joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together;*" so that, when the Truth comes home to their consciences, they are ready to join in the cry, "*Crucify him!*" That infuriated mob which closed around the Son of Man, contained persons as much alive to the agreeables of life, the pleasures of society, and the distinctions of rank, as any

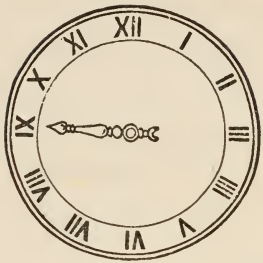
amongst thy acquaintance. But they were of the world, and therefore hated they the condemnation which the doctrines of the Son of God brought against their principles and life. Oh! then, let this hour remind thee of the loftiness of thy privileges, the sanctity of thy associations, the detachment of thy calling! When thou goest to thy business, quit thine house with this thought: "*I am a Christian!*" When thou meetest with low and carnal principles, quicken thy resolve against them by this appeal: "*I am a Christian!*" When thy spirit is ruffled, and thy passions are beginning to stir, silence their rebellion with this remembrance of thy dignity: "*I am a Christian!*" When strong and sudden temptations assail thee, repel them with this indignant rebuke: "*I am a Christian!*" This is to use thy baptism. This is to realize the effects of ordinances. If any reader should complain that he has not hi-

therto realized these things, what is the state of his heart? Is he looking to himself, or to his Lord? Is he trusting to his own might in the combat, or to the strength of Christ? Does he think himself safe because he is baptized and called a Christian, or does he expect safety only by being a fruitful branch of the Vine? Dear reader, the answer is simple: "*The things which are not seen are eternal.*" "*We walk by Faith, not by sight.*" Ordinances lead to Christ, but the instrument of apprehension is Faith. A simple faith will reveal all this mystery, and will make thee one with Christ.

At this hour Jesus was on his road to Calvary? Dost thou believe this? Canst thou picture it by Faith, and supply the cause of his anguish in thine own sins? Canst thou realize what followed as the ground of thy salvation? This is Faith, if the consequence be Love; for Love will make His sorrows

thine, and His will thy law. Between this hour and the next Pilate had, probably, written the inscription—"*This is Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews!*" Let this thought encourage thee. Do thou take up the Roman's pen, and write upon thy head and heart the answer—"*This is Jesus' disciple and subject!*" and let the world see it.

NINE O'CLOCK.



"AND THEY THAT ARE CHRIST'S HAVE CRUCIFIED THE FLESH."
Galat. v. 25.

THE PRINCIPLE OF VICTORY.

GRACE and victory are inseparable. This is the truth conveyed in the Apostle's words: "*Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.*" By this hour the great machinery of the world has been set in motion—the appointed tasks are commenced—the corre-

spondence of the day has begun. Before, then, that thy head and heart are immersed in these cares, remember, Christian, the warning of the NINTH hour. The principle of victory is the true sequel to that of grace; for, if the latter is declared in the Saviour's own terms, "*I am the vine, ye are the branches*," the Apostle adds, "AND THEY THAT ARE CHRIST'S HAVE CRUCIFIED THE FLESH." The community of image between the vine and the branch is carried further than a spiritual intercourse. The resemblance of the disciple to the Master would fail in its most important feature, if a certain amount of suffering were not virtually attached to his condition. Is not this the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews? "*It became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings; for both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanc-*

tified are all of one." And then, again, it is said, "*Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied: ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin.*" In all likelihood, it may not be the reader's call to "*resist unto blood;*" but, if he would be a disciple of Jesus Christ, he must "*strive against sin;*" and this is the suffering by which he is conformed to the image of his Captain, because "THEY THAT ARE CHRIST'S HAVE CRUCIFIED THE FLESH." This is the instrumental principle of victory; it is like a commanding position in a fortress, where all the approaches can be swept by its ordnance. So, from this citadel, the world and Satan are successfully and surely resisted. It is not without reason, therefore, that the Christian is urged to begin the conflict with himself and his own flesh. If the motions of sin are resisted, there will be no outbreaks; and external temptations will have little suc-

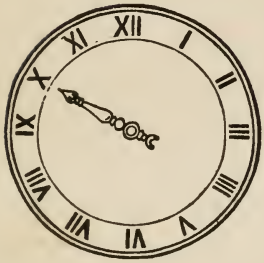
cess where they can make no lodgment. Let the thought of this chasten the reader's heart, as he is commencing the duties of the day. The scars of the old Roman were his testimonials, and orders of merit: the mortification of the spirit, and the crucifixion of the flesh, are the insignia of the Christian's rank. The suffering is not all our own: we are *partakers.* How appropriate, then, is the alliance with the time!—for this was the third hour of the Jewish day, and it brings before us the testimony of the Evangelist: "*And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.*" Can we not say with the Apostle, "*God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world?*" Oh, let not this application to our own condition seem strange, for it is the evidence of a disciple: "*They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh.*" Consider then, reader, lest thou shouldst be

weary. At this time thou art enjoying all the comforts of life—thy daily food, thy raiment, thy home, and the hope of an inheritance among the saints. At this time thy Lord was nailed on a tree. Draw the contrast; calculate the exchange; place thyself before that cross of wood whereon hangs the Saviour of the world; arraign thine own heart, and ask whether of the two deserves that lot, thou or He? Look at that attenuated form, whose bones may be told by the spectator; look at those gentle eyes, now troubled with anguish, near which, for nights and days, no sleep has come; look at those hands, that healed and blessed the sick and sad, and those feet, that carried mercy, now torn, and bruised, and swollen, by the iron that has pierced them. Look at that face, which was once so beautiful. Alas! it is marred more than the sons of men, for the smiter has wounded it. Man! whosoever thou art,

wouldst thou cherish the hand that slew thy parent, or the knife that drank the blood of thy child? How canst thou foster the assassin that destroyed thy nearest and dearest friend? Was it the Jew that nailed Jesus to the cross?—was it the Roman that sentenced him? No: it was thy sin—it was thy corruption—it was thyself: else how could the Apostle say, that if men shall fall away after having been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, they "*crucify to* THEMSELVES *the Son of God* AFRESH, *and put Him to an open shame?*" Oh, Christian, think on this truth till thou hast realized it! Let it provoke thee to choose spiritually what Peter welcomed to his body — crucifixion with Christ; or, as the English martyr, in the flame, condemned that unworthy hand which had shrunk from confessing Jesus, and held it forth to suffer first, so do thou sentence thy fleshly lusts and tempers, which have so

oft denied thy Lord. Bitter it may be—and who shall find the nails soft, or the cross a bed of repose?—but thou bearest but a part. It is with thee as it was on Calvary—the malefactors on either side, and *Jesus in the midst;* but He alone forsaken. Is it morning, or is it eve, be thou found with Christ; not with Christ a conqueror, nor Christ in glory, but with Christ crucified. Is this a thought too sad? Will it put the viol out of tune, and turn the festive dance into a sinful revel? Can Calvary be an unfit place for the world's merriment? Ah, Lord Jesus! it is there that Thou, being lifted up, dost draw all men unto Thee! and, till Thou shalt call me thence, I have no other resting-place.

TEN O'CLOCK.



"LET YOUR SPEECH BE ALWAY WITH GRACE, SEASONED WITH SALT."

Coloss. iv. 6.

PARTICULAR DUTIES.

IT is a strong, and, at first sight, a perplexing statement, that by our words we shall either be justified or condemned. A little reflection, however, is only required, to make the truth of it luminous and distinct. There is nothing, in fact, by which a man displays the real bias and savor of his mind more than by his

words. The reason is simple. Language is but the index of thought, and this the Scripture teaches us, when it asserts that "*out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.*" What we speak, therefore, will declare the state of our mind, and the degree in which we are endeavoring constantly to walk with Christ. Nor does hypocrisy in our conversation affect the truth of the assertion. A hypocrite will be always condemned in his particular sin, and his words, therefore, will turn evidence against him, in the same way as those of the more direct and palpable sinner. The tone and taste of a man's habitual conversation are a fair criterion, then, of his character. It is not necessary, indeed, that religion should be the perpetual, although it might well form the staple, subject; nor yet that it should be unceremoniously dragged in, much less offensively paraded; but there is a method of talking upon most subjects,

which, although disgusting when assumed, is no inconsiderable test of Christian grace. In short, DEVOUTNESS is the salt that seasons a Christian's conversation. It is the harmony of the combined graces of the Spirit, which, like a well-tuned and perfect chord in music, arises as the voice of many strings. It may be said, nevertheless, that there are many subjects of ordinary business and occupation which preclude the exercise of this principle. But that is not true. There is a way of speaking which shows what is uppermost. The purchase of stock, or the ordering of a dinner, gives no room for spiritual thought; but when the thing is done, the subject is dismissed, and better things come in. This is devoutness. It is the natural turning of the thoughts to One who occupies the heart, just as the liberated bow springs back to its original shape. But this, after all, is only a small part of the intention of this

remark. Men must converse, when they are met together, with no other object than the enjoyment of each other's society. This is the season, beyond all others, for the application of the Apostle's precept: and the meaning of it is this: that Christian edification should be the object of our conversation, and that we should be on our guard not to let it degenerate into frivolous, or exclusively secular, talk; in a word, that it should not lose its devoutness. If, however, it be said that all places (the ball-room, for example) are not suitable for this, we can only reply, that the Apostle gives no exception, and we must not make one. On the contrary, he is most exclusive, and says, "LET YOUR SPEECH BE ALWAY WITH GRACE." Whether this does not incidentally exhibit the incongruity of such revellings with the Christian character, we need not stop to inquire. If we are not engaged in our business,

and our conversation is not necessarily occupied in discussing matters relative thereto, let it be seasoned with the salt of a heavenly mind. If a man is of a heavenly mind, it will peep out; if he is not, it is only hypocrisy to assume it. But to what a dilemma is he, in the latter case, reduced? To no other, we reply, than the rest of his life reduces him; for a man's talk is, so far, a sort of thermometer, that tells us whether he is at blood-heat or at zero. Change of heart will effect, not only a change in life, but in talk also.

But now, reader, the clock is striking TEN, and you are, probably, at work. The tongue is a little member, but it works an infinity of good or evil. Admitting that it does not positively manifest the character of a speaker, positively it denounces him. "*If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, that*

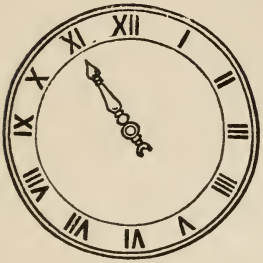
man's religion is vain." This hour reminds us of the misuse of that little member, and shows us that the warning is not without cause. It reminds us of a time when a multitude of men were assembled before a cross. For one hour the suspended criminal had been enduring the anguish of his position in patient silence. Not one of that multitude could tell wherefore he hung there, and yet many of their number rejoiced to witness His sufferings. To all His pangs their jeers and mockings were added. Their tongues were exercised in sporting with His anguish: for this was the season of the power of darkness, triumphing over the Light of the world. But it reminds us, also, of another time, when another multitude was assembled, to witness another scene. Was it not at *this hour* that Peter stood forth, to make known the first fruits of a Saviour's death? The crucifixion was an event still fresh in their minds. Fifty

days, save one, had elapsed since the report that He who was hanged on a tree was risen. It was an era of wonders. But ten days before, it had been asserted that the same being had visibly ascended into the Heavens; and now twelve men stood forth, twelve Galileans, the poor friends of the despised Nazarene, and spake in every known language of the world. Do not these two pictures recall to our minds the Apostle's description of the powers of the tongue? "*Therewith bless we God, even the Father, and therewith curse we men, who are made after the similitude of God.*" Christian reader, out of the same mouth ought not diverse thoughts to pass. Every member of thy body is sacred, but, above all, thy tongue! As the soldier receives his sword, and holds it for his sovereign's service alone, so the child of God appropriates the use of his tongue to the service of Christ. It is a profanation of its glory to make it the organ

of human passions and the other rebel authorities of sin.

But now, after all that has been said, what can it profit a man to know it? If it be hypocrisy in us to assume a virtue we have not, will it conduce to our welfare to be always talking *religiously?* For this is the point. It is not talking of religion that is here held up as the sign of a devout mind, but talking religiously of topics innocently introduced in conversation. May a man *assume* this tone of speaking without sin? Will a cautious tongue convert him? Will any thing govern his tongue, or guide it with meekness, short of a change of affections? Let all this be granted; but, if the stroke of TEN, bringing this admonition to mind, teach the believer to watch his lips; if it lead some careless one to question his condition; if it account for the duty of a Christian's circumspection in associating with worldly people, or mixing in worldly conversation, what has been said will not be useless.

ELEVEN O'CLOCK.



"WALK IN WISDOM TOWARD THEM THAT ARE WITHOUT, REDEEMING THE TIME."

Coloss. iv. 5.

PARTICULAR DUTIES.

THE Gospel has put all things in a new light, because it has brought them into new relations. In the first place, it has made man acquainted with the actual nature and number of his responsibilities. In the second place, it has both enlarged and defined his talents. Nothing proves this more than the one article of

Time, the whole importance of which is suspended upon the truth of the immortality of man. To the Christian, then, Time stands altogether in a new light, and is encompassed with fresh demands: for it is the appointed orbit of human sanctification. Filled it must be by something, and the Christian is called upon to fill it with a holy service. We have nothing that expresses this sentiment more sweetly and forcibly than the language of our liturgical thanksgiving:—"*Giving up* ourselves to Thy service, and *walking before Thee* in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life." If any one thing can distinguish a Christian from the world more effectually than another, it is the use of this talent. So strongly does the Apostle see it, that he calls on us to "WALK IN WISDOM TOWARDS THEM THAT ARE WITHOUT—REDEEMING THE TIME;" as though the use of Time was the grand mark of distinction between God's servants

and the world. The force of his remark, in fact, lies in the connection of the two precepts, the latter exhibiting to us the meaning of the former. The real expression of the Greek word is "purchasing away from," and conveys to us this thought, that it was a loss of Time to walk as those without were walking. In other words, it might be thus understood—"Walk in sobriety as Christians before the world about you, in order that they may see how elevated is your employment of Time above theirs. Let your course of life be distinct from theirs, for you have no Time to waste." And may not language like this be used to the modern Christian, as well as to the Colossian of old? It is true that the distinction refers to the heathen world; but, saving those flagitious enormities which heathenism fostered, it would not be hard to show that the Time of many professing Christians is no better occupied. Surely the Gos-

pel has an inner screen, a holy of holies, which draws a line between those without and those within; not the shibboleth of a party, nor an outward profession, but the characters of a consistent life, and a holy employment of Time. Thus, two considerations are suggested in the exhortation of this hour; one referring to our conduct in regard to those without, the other intimating what our own employment of Time should be. It is a great mistake to suppose that the Gospel neither makes nor requires distinctions; at least, its Author, in expressing its tendency to divide and sectionize the world, calls it a sword. If it be said that the Saviour's remark extends only to the distinctions of the Christian and heathen worlds, how is this to be proved? The Saviour stated a future fact, without qualification or limit; and what is to be said for the experiences of life, and for such a state of things as the nominally

Christian world presents? Are the distinctions of spirituality and holiness to be exclusively reserved till the day of public account; and are the ministers of the Gospel to be silent in regard to the deeper and more conclusive evidences of the Christian character, and not to push its requirements and separations beyond a mere outward conformity and moral decency. But, in point of truth, the difficulty in question practically decides for itself. Men do make these distinctions. There is as little inclination on the part of a person of decided spirituality of tone, to amalgamate with men of the world, however refined and worthy of human admiration, as if the prediction of the Saviour had referred exclusively to Christian society. It is these actual differences which enable the Christian to point out the conformity of experience with the marked divisions of the Bible. The question before us, then, is how the Chris-

tian is to walk towards the world. The Apostle answers, "IN WISDOM." Tenderness, steadiness, and unyielding adherence to duty, and to one's principles, are the characteristics of this wisdom. But the Apostle appears to explain this by the subsequent expression, "REDEEMING THE TIME;" and on the observance of this rests the broad line of separation between the Christian and the world.

Let us suppose a worldly man to ask the question of a Christian, "How would you have me use my Time?" The reply would at once be, "Use it in the service of God." If he should again ask, "How much of this talent is to be so specifically employed?" the reply would again be, "All." Both answers are strictly scriptural, and in unison with common sense. The Christian's use of Time is here set in contrast to that of the world, and this is the very substance of the contrast, that *they are respectively different in the object*

of service. The reader will not mistake this statement. It is not because every moment is chargeable on religious grounds, that all our employment is to consist of religious pursuits, so called. The real distinction lies partly in the spirit in which our occupations are conducted, and partly in the character of those occupations themselves. Thus our worldly duties are one particular of service. We serve God when we diligently earn our bread; and it is only when we are hankering after more than a sufficiency, that we are serving ourselves. On the other hand, no Christian lives without some specific work in hand for his Master. But there is a large mass of people who are released, by circumstances, from laboring for a livelihood. Men of independent property, for example, and vast numbers of females, have really nothing to call forth their attention beyond a few domestic arrangements. So far are such indivi-

duals from being acquitted of all religious service, that they are the very persons who, by their freedom from the cares of business, are appointed by God for the prosecution of those works of charity and utility which give the true stamp of Christianity to this country. It is an honor to many a coronet, that it sparkles with the jewel of Christian devotion, and that the "*pearl of great price*" is found to consecrate the illustrious appendages of nobility. But, now, to persons of the foregoing description, the question of the use of Time becomes very serious. Truly might it be said to them: "To you it is given, more than to others, to exhibit the spiritual capability and the dilating energies of the Gospel. You do not possess rank, influence, leisure, or money, in order that you may enjoy the excitement of the season in town, and the luxurious idleness of the country, by turns, but that you should mag-

nify your opportunities." Should the reader, then, be in possession of all or any of these responsibilities, let the hour of ELEVEN remind him to redeem the Time. Objects of attention he may find in abundance. The charities of the great metropolis, (from which, as from a centre, radiates a flame that warms the world,) and the education of the poor in our own parishes, together with their temporal and spiritual improvement every where, present unlimited means of usefulness. There is a great pressure, at the present moment, however, from the impulse of the religious feelings of society, and many have undertaken charitable pursuits with as little of judgment as of real Christian principle. This demands the reader's watchfulness, that he does not suffer himself to act in an ostentatious spirit, or in the mistakes of fashionable charity; for it is the unobtrusive and single-minded endeavor to

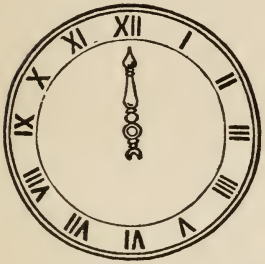
do something *for Christ*, which serves Him, and occupies our Time. Well, then, Christian, let this be the warning of the ELEVENTH hour: "Redeem the Time." Wonderful is the instance that it recalls of diligence at the ELEVENTH hour! Wonderful and solitary the example of redeeming the Time! About this hour it was, that the soul of a dying thief, as it fluttered upon the confines of eternity, saw, felt, and embraced the moment of the world's redemption. An opportunity of grace, single in the annals of Time, presented itself; it was seized and secured; and he that had the faith to do it, is now reaping the reward. Whatever thy pursuit may be, when this hour vibrates upon thine ear, let it check thee with the self-inquiry, Am I walking in wisdom towards the world? Am I redeeming the Time? In what spirit am I working? What is the tendency of my present pursuit?

Let us not forget, however, that this is an hour consecrated to worship. The notes that each belfry in the land sets forth, convey something more to our ears—not merely a caution, but an invitation, and yet such an invitation as may well chime in with the supposed language of ELEVEN O'CLOCK, "Redeem the Time." Yes, like the opportunity of the dying thief, this may be the Eleventh hour to some soul, and a season propitious in grace. Does not the cheerful tone of that last bell, which gives notice, as it were, that the good man, who is about to minister to you in holy things, is preparing for the coming service—does not that bell bid us come to the court of the great King with hope and joy? Does it not seem to say, "*To-day! if ye will hear*," redeem the Time? Or is it at night, when we are retiring to rest, that we are attracted by the admonitory voice of this hour, does it not summon us to self-examina-

tion? Or are we in the society of friends, with whom we are just parting, after a few hours' enjoyment? Can Time be redeemed more certainly than in the union of many hearts in prayer? Where was Jesus at this hour? Was He on His face in Gethsemane? Lord! as Thou art, so let me be.

1 *Pet.* ii. 17.

TWELVE O'CLOCK.



"HERE HAVE WE NO CONTINUING CITY, BUT WE SEEK ONE TO COME."

Hebrews xiii. 14.

THE LOOK-OUT.

READER! we have arrived at the *last* hour; for though the divisions of Time travel in a circle, clocks will stop, and books must have an end. With the Twelfth hour, then, we will associate the touching but solemn image of the Apostle: "HERE HAVE WE NO CONTINUING CITY, BUT WE SEEK ONE TO

COME." Amid the stir of noonday, or in the stillness of midnight, it will serve to remind us of our vocation and destiny. For this is, in so many words, the expression of the Christian condition. This world is a land of travel. To-day we pitch our tent; to-morrow we strike it and depart; so that, if we would journey in comfort, we must have as few encumbrances as possible. We cannot sit down, and abide in any one of the pleasant places which we find, for a tent is but a sorry habitation for a home, and we have nothing better than a tent for the present passage. When, therefore, the reader hears the call of TWELVE O'CLOCK, let him imagine that it tells him, "Thou hast no home here." Let it remind him to be on the look-out. Alas! we have need of this! Let us lay aside our figure, and grapple with some of the obstacles which we find in the way of our embracing the familiar realities of the Chris-

tian pilgrimage. Who would suppose that the world around us is doomed? Who would think that many who talk of the Christian's prospects, and the hope of glory, the uncertainty of riches, and the certainty of death, believed their own words? What is the picture that greets our eyes on every side? Here is one intent upon the comforts of life. He is what the world calls "comfortably settled." He is on good terms with his neighbors; has an agreeable family; is very much respected, and wants nothing. But "*he has settled on his lees.*" His sole object is to pass peaceably through life, neither aiming at great things, nor exposing himself to the shafts of malignity, nor stirring himself for the truth. His heart is not set upon the future. Can this be a pilgrim?

Here is another of a different turn. Active and restless, he is bent upon great things. In business he is for pushing his way by bold

enterprise. In a profession, he is for rising to eminence. Money he regards only as a means to an end; but he must have money in order to be great. But is this the greatness of the city to come? Can this be a pilgrim?

Here, again, is a third, differing from both. This is a man of science. Tasteful and refined, he can appreciate deeply all that relates to nature, literature, and science. Pursuits of this character fill up his time. Not that he disregards religion. This has its place, and a certain amount of attention, but *intellect, not Christ*, engrosses the chief portion of his time and thought. Can this be a pilgrim?

A fourth character is a female, sensible and well informed, methodical in her habits, and a judicious manager of her family: but she aims at a good position in society; she studies the proprieties and fashions of life; she seeks good alliances for her children, and counts

herself happy if she succeed in her plans. Can this, too, be one who neither has, nor seeks to have, a home in this world? Can this be a pilgrim?

Turn now, reader, for a moment, to the occurrence which TWELVE O'CLOCK brings to our remembrance. "*And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land.*" This is midnight for noonday; but, out of that darkness, what light sprung forth to gladden the world! Under this gloom, in which nature sought to hide the dreadful sacrifice from itself, was brought on the climax of the Saviour's agony. But, O Christian! is there no connection between this and thee? Is there nothing in this scene of horror to bear upon thy condition? Mark the connection in which the light of God's Word places it:—"*Let us go forth, therefore, unto Him, without the camp, bearing his reproach:* FOR HERE HAVE WE NO CONTINUING CITY, BUT

WE SEEK ONE TO COME." What a different picture is here!—Jesus in darkness at noonday: the world in all the glare of its enjoyments. These are the two objects offerod fer choice. Reader, it is incumbent upon you to choose! Would you follow Jesus?—You must go forth without the camp of this world Would you follow Jesus?—You must bear his reproach. The hour of TWELVE reminds you, seasonably, of this necessity, because it reminds you of your present lot and future prospects. You have no continuing city here, whether you will seek one to come, or not. You may heap up comforts, and carry off distinctions, and manage matters dexterously, and pass as agreeably through life as any time-killer could wish; but, what then? Fading powers, dimmed faculties, blunted tastes, failing health, the sick-bed, the death-struggle, are coming, and your pilgrimage is over. · But, where are you? You have gone

one way—Jesus has gone the other. You have kept with the world, and its camp; Jesus has taken His body unto Himself, out of the camp, as he requested—"*Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me, be with me, where I am.*" The Christian pilgrimage is no fantasy, any more than the Gospel promises. The one is contingent upon the other. The promise makes the pilgrim. A city to come has been held up to the affections and emulation of the world—a city that hath no need of sun, nor yet of moon, to shine in it; whose walls are of jasper, and foundations of precious stones laid by God; whose gates are pearls, and streets of shining gold. In the midst of it is a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal; and on either side the tree of life, whose fruit is yielded every month. This is the city set in contrast to the camp of this world, and this it is which makes the pilgrims.

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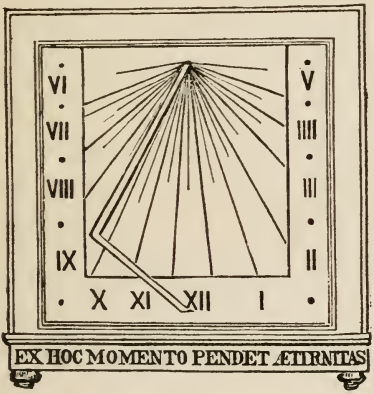
Well, then, reader, to this thou art called. TWELVE O'CLOCK bids thee be mindful of it. When thou hearest it strike, ask thyself—to what thou art looking, what thou art pursuing, on what thou art set? Think of the darkness that spread over the world at this hour. Does it not teach thee that there is no light here? Imitate, then, the patience of the fire-worshipper, who watched, before the dawn of day, for the burst of its glory upon the horizon of the ocean. Amid the pressure of business, or the calls of ambition, or the enticements of pleasure; amid all those perplexities or agreeables which make life either a trial or a pleasant passage, let not thine eye wander from the horizon of its ocean. Wait with patient expectation for the morning; it will break at last, it will surely come, it will not tarry; and then, Christian, while the world has been seeking to enliven its night by the paltry lamps of its officious

and miserable enjoyments, and while thou hast been contented to watch, in the twilight of thy hope, for the revelation of its glorious object, thine eye shall be suddenly entranced, and thine heart be filled with worship, as thou seest that great city of thy hopes, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God, and having his everlasting glory.

Conclusion.

AND now, ere we quit the subject, let me address to the reader a parting word. In thus accompanying him through the circuit of the hours, it has been my wish to suggest to him some useful thoughts, that might tend to keep alive in his heart a feeling of devotion to his great calling. It is not that I have ventured so much to direct the appropriation of his time, as to show the importance of every part of it. The sum of all that I have said, therefore, amounts to this, that one hour is as precious as another. It is not the past, nor yet the future, that demands our attention, but *the present moment;* for every thing that is valuable and dear is crowded into that little space;

and, to use a thought of the great Fenelon, "Time is the only gift in which God has stinted us; for He never intrusts us with a second moment till He has taken away the first, and never leaves us certain of a third." In saying farewell, therefore, and bidding him "God-speed" upon his pilgrimage, let me salute him in the words of that eloquent, though silent monitor, the sun-dial of Lincoln's Inn—



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